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Proceedings of the Club

WEDNESDAY EVENING, 30 OCT., 1901

Meeting at the College of Pharmacy at 8 p. m., Rev. L. H. Lighthipe in the chair, 19 persons present.

Three new members were elected: F. S. Earle, Botanical Garden, Bronx Park, N. Y.; Alexander P. Anderson, Columbia University, N. Y.; Miss Caroline Coventry Haynes, 16 East 36th street.

The scientific program was opened by a paper by Dr. D. T. MacDougal, entitled "Some Characters of alpine Vegetation." The paper was illustrated with numerous sheets of mountain plants from Montana, many of them attached photographs showing the habitat. In the Missoula region where Dr. MacDougal was working this summer, the growing season for many plants was about 40 days only, but the actual light reaching the plants may have been 30 to 40 per cent. greater than at sea level, and with a larger proportion of blue rays. These mountain tops may be among the dryest places on the continent or may contain swamp pockets. There is no distinct type of alpine vegetation as such ; but alpine plants are really xerophytes, being such plants as have adapted themselves to an insufficient water-supply.

Our alpine plants are often thought to be identical with polar plants. But the polar plant receives light continuously through a long period, though the light is of little intensity. The polar plant has an atmosphere of much greater humidity but a much colder soil. Polar plants develop much greater thickness of leaf. Alpine plants abound in more numerous protective devices, as waxy coatings, hair, thicker stems, and modes of propagation without seeds. *Poa alpina*, for example, in many mountain regions is never known to flower.

Remarks followed regarding the viviparous form of *Poa alpina*, Dr. Rydberg observing its abundance in Greenland and Spitzbergen, and Miss Isaacs remarking on her collecting it at 7500 ft., the last summer in Switzerland.

Dr. Underwood called attention to the relative amount of sunlight in tropical and in northern regions, pointing out that the amount of light is much greater north of the tropics though more oblique.

Discussion followed regarding relations of moisture. Dr. Schoeney referred to the peculiar erect and densely appressed stems assumed by a cespitose *Opuntia* about Boulder, Colorado.

Dr. MacDougal spoke of the remarkable degree to which many of the cacti have adapted themselves to xerophytic conditions, so that they lose water less than one-three hundredth as readily as in ordinary plant structures in similar positions.

Dr. Rydberg referred to the permanent moisture found within 10 or 12 inches of the surface in the dry sandhills of Nebraska.

The second paper was by Dr. P. A. Rydberg, "Revision of *Limnorchis* and *Piperia*," which was printed in full in the November BULLETIN.

Reference was made by Mr. G. H. Watson to a remarkable growth near Ellenville, New York, where two trees not only different in species but in family had so twisted together as to become incorporated, and in response to the expressed appreciation of its significance, he promised further investigation and a photograph of the trees.

EDWARD S. BURGESS,
Secretary.